



Partnership in Behavioral Health and Aging

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Older Adults & Mental Health

- 1 in 4 persons aged 55+ experience mental health disorders, including anxiety and mood disorders
- 1 in 5 older adults in the community experience symptoms of depression
- 1 in 3 older adults in primary care experience symptoms of depression
- Depression is costly, disabling and deadly

Older Adults & Suicide

- Older adults = 12% of U.S. population & 16% of suicides
- Prevalence Rate: 1/4 (older adults)
1/100-200 (young adults)
- Especially white males over age 64
- Attempts are more lethal
- Up to 75% visited a medical doctor in last month before suicide
- Suicide is strongly associated with depression and other serious mental illnesses

Older Adults & Substance Use

An estimated **one in five** older Americans (19%) may be affected by combined difficulties with alcohol and medication misuse.



Older Adults & Substance Prescription Drug Use/Misuse

- Chronic health conditions (CHC)
- 80% have 1 CHC
- 50% have at least 2 CHC
- 3/10 older adults use 5 or more Rx (plus OTC, supplements, herbals)
- Many side effects, drug interactions
- Impact of alcohol use



Prescription Drug Abuse in Older Adults

- Reduced ability to absorb & metabolize meds with age
- Increased chance of toxicity or adverse effects
- Med-related delirium or dementia wrongly labeled as Alzheimer's disease



Prescription Drug Use: Growing Problem

- In 2004, there were an estimated 115,803 emergency department (ED) visits involving medication misuse and abuse by adults aged 50 or older
- In 2008, there were 256,097 such visits, representing an increase of 121.1 percent (SAMHSA, DAWN Report, 2010)
- By 2020, non-medical use of psychoactive prescription drugs among adults aged ≥ 50 years will increase from 1.2% (911,000) to 2.4% (2.7 million) (Colliver et al, 2006)

Identifying High Risk Older Adults

- Use of certain medications (e.g., warfarin, digoxin, diuretics, psychoactive meds, analgesics)
- 4 or more medications
- Certain chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes)
- Evidence of medication misuse
- Chronic alcohol use

Signs of Drug Misuse/Abuse

- Loss of motivation
- Memory loss
- Family or marital discord
- New difficulty with activities of daily living (ADL)
- Difficulty sleeping
- Drug seeking behavior
- Doctor shopping

Impact on Healthcare Providers

- Medication misuse causes adverse health consequences for patient
- Worsens prognosis of coexisting medical and/or psychiatric conditions
- Significant proportion of practice is dealing with consequences of unrecognized/untreated addiction
- Leads to practitioner frustration

Behavioral health issues,
such as depression and anxiety,
are **NOT** a normal part of aging.

Prevention Works

Treatment is Effective

People Recover!

SAMHSA's Older Americans Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center

- Partnership between SAMHSA (CSAP and CMHS) and the Administration for Community Living's/Administration on Aging (AoA)
- This effort focuses on suicide prevention, prescription drug and illicit drug misuse/abuse, alcohol abuse, and anxiety and depression.
- Audience CMHS's Target Capacity Expansion Grantees and AoA's Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), and states as they implement behavioral health programs/services for older adults ages 60 and older.

Older Americans

Policy Academy Regional Meetings

- **Purpose:** state teams explore and strategize around the issues and challenges of promoting behavioral health for older adults.
- **Participants:**
- **State teams** consisting of representatives from the:
 - State Office on Aging
 - State Mental Health Authority
 - Single State Authority for Substance Abuse
 - State Medicaid Authority
- **Technical Assistance and Consultation:** SAMHSA and ACL/AoA staff (including SAMHSA/ACL Regional Administrators)

Resources

- SAMHSA website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/>
- “Get Connected” Tool Kit:
 - www.samhsa.gov/Aging/docs/GetConnectedToolkit.pdf
- Prevention Pathways Courses: “At Any Age It Does Matter”
 - <http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov>